

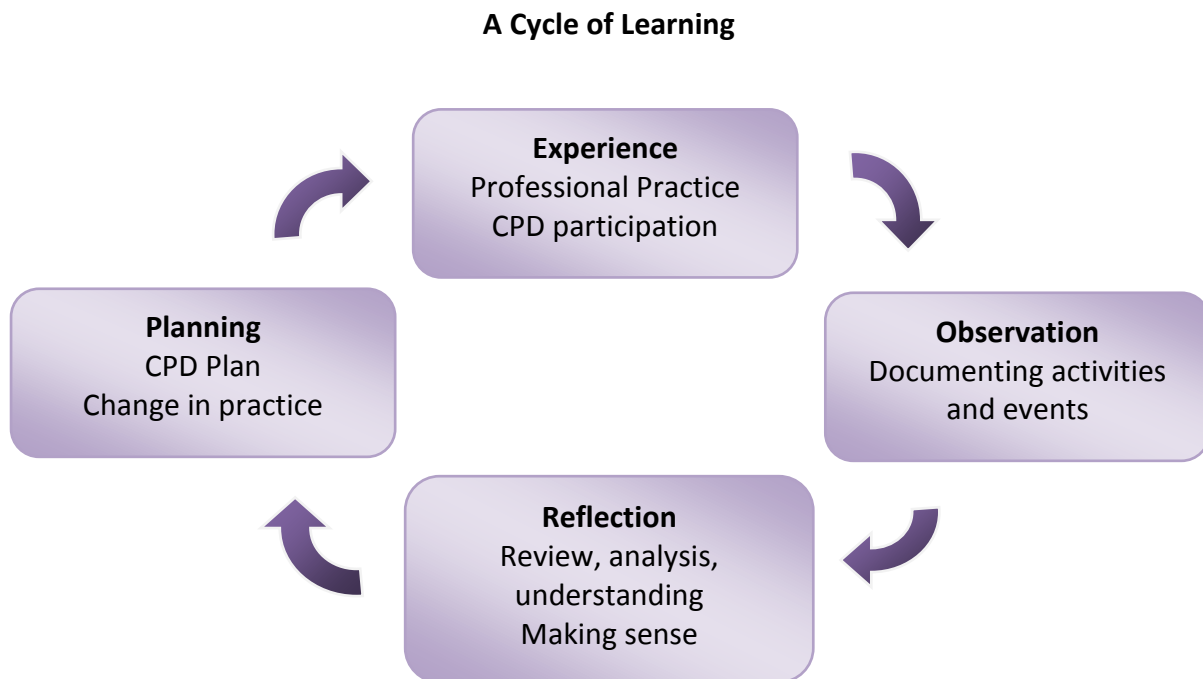
## Toolkit - Writing your reflection

Reflection is an important process of personal and professional learning. This toolkit is intended to help you understand reflection and engage in reflective learning. Learning also occurs outside the conference room.

### What is reflection?

Reflection can be seen as *consciously thinking about and analysing what one has done*. Reflective learning looks back over what we have experienced to help us understand our own learning processes and what was learnt.

Learning from experience also provides opportunities to analyse our decision-making processes and identify areas for improving your practice. Reflection also encourages us to look beyond our technical expertise to recognize our interpersonal skills and attributes, such as self-motivation and collaboration. Finally, reflecting provides us information to evaluate our CPD participation. It is part of a cycle of learning.



### Why should I write reflections?

The benefits of reflective learning can be summarised in the following objectives:

- To analyse your experiences to facilitate learning,
- To better understand the knowledge and skills necessary for your practice,
- To improve your performance by encouraging the recognition of slips, lapses, and incidents,
- To reinforce positive actions that have resulted in a good outcome,

- To encourage a questioning attitude and critical thinking that fosters self-learning,
- To provide proof of your CPD and progression in self-development.

### **When should I write my reflections?**

You should write a reflection after any event that you consider important, such as an adverse or a favourable incident. You may also wish to make a comment periodically, every 1-4 weeks, as a Reflection overview of your CPD and practice experiences in that period.

### **What can I write in my reflection?**

#### *Learning reflection*

When you have a learning experience that you have found interesting or that relates directly to your practice, you may wish to write a reflection regarding the experience. You may wish to consider the following questions to help you analyse the experience:

- A record of the activity or a description of the subject matter.
- Did you feel good or bad, and why?
- What was the situation that influenced your thoughts and feelings (eg environment, time availability, resources used, your motivation, etc)?
- Given the same situation again, what would you do?
- What are the implications for your practice arising from the activity?
- What specific or extra skills, tools, or resources do you need for a similar situation?

#### *Event reflection*

When you have a positive event within your practice, reflection on contributing factors and the outcomes may help to reinforce learning and behaviour. If you have an adverse event, using the format of a critical incident report as a basis of reflection may be of use. You may wish to consider the following questions to help you analyse the event:

- A description of the event.
- What was/were the cause(s)?
- What were extenuating factors?
- Could the adverse event have been avoided, and if so, how?
- What was the outcome?
- How has the event affected your practice?
- What did you learn from the event?
- Has the event changed any of your attitudes and ideas?

#### *Periodic reflection*

Periodic reflection involves review activities and events from a predetermined time period. Your comments could be based on the following examples:

- What do you feel about your CPD participation and your progress?

- Has your learning been effective?
- Are you able to meet your objectives in your CPD Plan so far?
- Do you need to change your CPD Plan?
- How do you learn most effectively?
- What are the barriers to your learning or CPD participation?
- How can these barriers be tackled?
- What are the gaps in your knowledge and skills?
- What changes have you implemented in your practice as a result of your CPD?
- Has your performance improved as a result of your CPD?
- What aspects of your attributes of a specialist anaesthetist have you improved?
- Have you changed in your motivation or attitude towards your learning?
- What do you feel about your workplace and your colleagues?
- How would you improve any poor feelings that you may have about your workplace and your colleagues?

**How many Credits can I Claim?**

You may claim time spent in writing your reflections under category 3, level 2 for 3 credits per hour.